

Campaigning against Europe? The role of Euroskeptic fringe and mainstream parties in the 2009 European Parliament election.

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Abstract

In this paper we analyze political parties' campaign communication during the 2009 European Parliament election in 11 countries (Aus, Bul, CZ, Ger, Hun, NL, Pol, Port, Sp, Sw, UK). We study which types of issues Euroskeptic fringe and Euroskeptic mainstream parties put on their campaign agendas and the kind and extent of EU opposition they voice. Further, we seek to understand whether Euroskeptic and non-Euroskeptic parties co-orient themselves towards each other within their national party systems with regard to their campaigns. To understand the role of Euroskeptic parties in the 2009 European Parliament elections, we draw on a systematic content analysis of parties' posters and televised campaign spots. Our results show that it is Euroskeptic parties at the edges of the political spectrum who discuss polity questions of EU integration and who most openly criticize the Union. Principled opposition against the project of EU integration, however, can only be observed in the UK. Finally, we find indicators for co-orientation effects regarding the tone of EU mobilization: In national political environments where Euroskeptic parties strongly criticize the EU, pro-European parties at the same time publicly advance pro-EU positions.

(1) Introduction

For a long time, EU integration has been regarded as a political process which is depoliticized and uncontested. This depoliticized form of integration has been characterized, on the one hand, by citizens' permissive consensus (Lindberg & Scheingold, 1970). On the other hand, it was national parties, social movements as well as the mass media – the intermediary organizations of our societies – that did not publicly communicate European matters and did not place them on the public agendas. However, more and more researchers challenge the idea of a depoliticized integration process in Europe. On the side of citizens, support for EU integration has been declining since the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty (Eichenberg & Dalton, 2007). Eijk and Franklin (2004) were able to show that citizens' pro- and anti-EU orientations constitute relatively stable attitudes and that these attitudes do not only differ, but are more extreme than citizens' attitudes on the left-right dimension. Such attitudes, they claim, “constitute something of a ‘sleeping giant’ that has the potential, if awakened, to impel voters to political behavior that... undercuts the bases for contemporary party mobilization in many, if not most, European polities” (Eijk & Franklin, 2004, p. 32).

Scientific dispute today refers to the degree of awakening of this sleeping giant. It is the intermediary organizations, specifically the parties, that foster or hinder such a process – others would call it the politicization of EU integration. Only if these organizations publicly advance EU matters and contest different positions will it be likely that voters will engage in political behavior (De Wilde, 2007). Eijk and Franklin (2004) claim that parties still offer little choice with respect to EU integration but still follow a silent pro-EU consensus. But even these authors see it as only a matter of time “before policy entrepreneurs... seize the opportunity... to differentiate themselves from other parties in EU terms” (Eijk & Franklin, 2004, p. 47). Other researchers observe that Euroskeptic parties have already started to break the silent pro-European consensus of the mainstream (e.g. Kriesi et al., 2006) as EU mobilization offers them the opportunity to differentiate themselves from others and thereby win votes.

In our eyes, it is time to go beyond “lots of speculations” (Kriesi, 2008, p. 224) and actually empirically tackle the question how Euroskeptic parties campaign against Europe and how this might result in processes of co-orientation between Euroskeptics and non-Euroskeptics. Thereby we focus on the campaign communication during the 2009 European Parliament elections. The data for this study were collected within the framework of the project “Between Integration and Demarcation. Strategies and Effects of Party Campaigns in the Context of the 2009 European Parliament Election.”¹ For this paper we analyze the data from a systematic content analysis of parties’ posters and televised spots in the 2009 EP campaign in 11 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK). These countries were chosen because all of them have Euroskeptic parties and most even have different types of Euroskeptic parties.

On the basis of this data, we study how Euroskeptic parties publicly articulate and contest EU integration in their EP campaigns. We are especially interested in finding out if there are systematic differences between different types of Euroskeptic parties, i.e., Euroskeptic fringe and Euroskeptic mainstream parties. More specifically, we address the research questions which type of EU-issues Euroskeptic fringe and mainstream parties address in their campaigns and whether these parties differ with regard to the degree and form of EU opposition. Second, we analyze whether there is a co-orientation between Euroskeptic parties and pro-European parties with regard to the type of EU-issues addressed in the campaigns and the willingness to voice their position in reference to European integration.

To answer these questions, we proceed in five steps. First, we need to define what Euroskepticism means in reference to parties and which parties have as yet been classified as Euroskeptic. Second, we derive hypotheses about the role of such Euroskeptic parties for EU politicization from the literature.

¹ This project was directed by Michaela Maier (University of Koblenz-Landau) and Silke Adam (University of Bern). Partial funding was granted by the research group (Kollegforschergruppe (KFG)) ‘The Transformative Power of Europe’ of the Freie Universität Berlin and the Department of Communication Psychology at the University of Koblenz-Landau.

Third, we introduce our data, operationalizations, and methods of how we identify and categorize Euroskeptical and pro-European parties and how we analyze and compare their campaigns. In a fourth step, we present our empirical results. We end with a summary of what we have learned about the role of Euroskeptical parties for the politicization of European integration and where future research should head.

(2) The identification of Euroskeptical parties and their location on the political spectrum

Euroskeptical parties between ideology and strategy

The conflict potential on the side of the citizens has triggered quite some research on parties' positions and their mobilization strategies towards Europe. Researchers have been especially interested in those challenging the pro-European mainstream, namely the Euroskeptical parties. Euroskepticism is a term widely used, but used with different connotations (Krouwel & Abts, 2007). To clarify the term Euroskepticism, we follow the general distinction made by Szczerbiak and Taggart (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2003). On the one hand, Euroskepticism describes parties' general ideological position. On the other hand, it is also used to describe a concrete contestatory political discourse. These two concepts differ fundamentally as a party's broad underlying ideological position may be different from what this party chooses to publicly advance in a specific campaign. A party might be Euroskeptical in its fundamental position, but for strategic reasons might decide not to voice this skepticism in the context of an election campaign. In contrast, there may be mainstream parties with pro-EU positions that criticize EU integration for specific matters in the context of a specific campaign. Following this reasoning, we distinguish between a party's general ideological position and its strategic campaign communication. The question whether parties with an underlying Euroskeptical ideology also conduct a contestatory political discourse is one guiding research question of this paper. The other central question is whether in a specific political environment where Euroskeptical parties publicly voice their criticism, pro-European mainstream parties also put specific types of EU issues on the agenda and voice their positions on EU integration.

Euroskeptic parties and their location on the left-right spectrum

So far most research shows that Euroskeptic parties are primarily found at the fringes of the ideological left-right spectrum (De Vries & Edwards, 2009; Eijk & Franklin, 2004; Hix & Lord, 1997; Hooghe & Marks, 2002; Kriesi et al., 2006; Taggart, 1998). The political spectrum can be described as an inverted u-curve. Traditional mainstream parties with ideologically non-extremist positions are located in the middle of this inverted u-curve. Most of them agree on a moderate pro-integration position. At the edges of this inverted u-curve, we find the more extreme parties which show a stronger tendency toward Euroskepticism. Those at the right end of the spectrum oppose EU integration primarily on cultural grounds, whereas they see less of a problem with the economic dimension of EU integration. These parties perceive transnational integration as a threat to the sovereignty of the nation state, their culture, and traditions. Those at the left end of the spectrum oppose EU integration for economic reasons. It is the liberal free-market character of the EU that is perceived as a threat to social welfare achievements (Kriesi et al., 2006). Euroskepticism in this perspective is treated as a fringe phenomenon in the party system. However, Ray (Ray, 2007) shows that there are some important exceptions where Euroskepticism has been taken up by mainstream parties, especially by the center-right parties. Consequently, in the following we distinguish two groups of Euroskeptic parties: Euroskeptic parties that are located at the fringes of the party spectrum are separated from those Euroskeptic parties with mainstream ideology. In the following we will derive expectations about the roles that these two types of Euroskeptic parties play for the politicization of European integration.

(3) The role of Euroskeptic parties for EU politicization – hypotheses

Regarding the contestatory political discourse of parties, i.e., the question which type of EU-issues political parties raise in their campaigns, Mair (2007) identifies two mobilization dimensions: the functional and the Europeanization dimension. The functional dimension refers to policy areas where the EU already has competences. On this dimension the dispute concerns the approach and priorities. The Europeanization dimension in contrast refers to the shape and reach of the EU, i.e., so-called poli-

ty issues. The type of issues which should be discussed in EP elections are functional policy issues, as here the European Parliament is on equal footage with national parliaments at least in those areas where the co-decision procedure is applied (Jones, in press). In contrast, the shape and reach of EU integration is still primarily decided by national politicians, and therefore these polity issues should rather be discussed in national elections. However, Mair (2007) claims that in reality we find the opposite: If political parties decide to articulate EU-issues in their election campaigns, most often these are polity issues which deal with the shape and reach of EU integration. Since such polity issues raise the fundamental questions of EU integration, we expect that Euroskeptic parties – and especially those at the fringes of the party spectrum – will best fit Mair’s expectation and raise polity issues in their campaigns. As a consequence, Hypothesis 1 dealing with the articulation of the *fundamental questions of EU integration* claims:

H1: Euroskeptic fringe parties put EU-polity issues on the campaign agenda more often than Euroskeptic mainstream parties.

Besides these dimensions of mobilization, another crucial variable for the description of the political discourse is the strength of opposition against the European Union which is put forward in the parties’ campaigns. Here again, we expect that the two groups of parties – although both are Euroskeptic in their general position – will shape contestatory political discourses very differently. We expect the fringe parties to voice their Euroskeptical perspectives more openly than the Euroskeptic mainstream parties because mainstream parties’ voicing of Euroskepticism is restricted by actual and potential government involvement which makes these parties part of EU decision-making on the national as well as European level. The best example is the Czech ODS, a conservative Euroskeptic party, whose leader was the President of the European Council at the time of the European election. In such a position it is hard to openly voice Euroskepticism. On the basis of these arguments, we would expect that fringe parties will have more incentives (in terms of possible vote gains) and less reservations (in terms of possible governing duties) to openly voice their criticism of the European Union in its current form. Therefore, Hypothesis 2a referring to the *degree of EU opposition* claims:

H2a: Euroskeptic fringe parties articulate stronger criticism towards the European Union in its current form than Euroskeptic mainstream parties.

Another concept closely related to the amount of criticism that Euroskeptic parties voice against the European Union is the form of opposition they choose. Here, researchers have worked on differentiating between soft / unprincipled opposition that refers to a number of policy areas and hard / principled opposition that involves the rejection of the whole integration project including demands to withdraw from the Union (Szczerbiak & Taggard, 2003; Taggard, 1998). This soft-hard criterion allows us to understand whether Euroskeptics publicly fight the EU per se or whether they just advance different ideas about how EU integration should proceed. As we already argued above, we suppose that it is the parties at the fringes of the political spectrum which most likely will articulate principled opposition against the project of European integration. Hypothesis 2b referring to the *form of EU opposition* claims:

H2b: Euroskeptic fringe parties voice principled opposition against EU integration more often than Euroskeptic mainstream parties.

Our research hypotheses so far have dealt with differences between fringe and mainstream Euroskeptic parties. As we mentioned above, we will also seek to tackle the question whether there exists a co-orientation between Euroskeptic and pro-European parties within each country. The rationale for this expansion of our research question is based on the understanding that parties strategically decide on their campaigns always with reference to the other competitors in their own system. No party has a monopoly on the overall campaign agenda. Steenbergen and Scott (Steenbergen & Scott, 2004) show empirically that EU mobilization of a party also affects the salience of EU-issues for other parties in the same country. This result is also supported for the campaign communication in six countries in the context of the 2009 EP elections (Adam & Maier, 2009b). It is this idea of a co-orientation between pro-European and Euroskeptical parties within their respective national party system that we will implement in our study. First, we expect co-orientation regarding the type of EU-issues on the agenda. If

Euroskeptic (fringe) parties campaign on the fundamental questions regarding the shape and reach of EU integration in a specific country, it is likely that these polity issues will also be prominently featured on the campaign agendas of pro-European parties. Hypothesis 3 referring to *co-orientation regarding the type of EU-issues discussed* claims:

H3: Pro-European parties will also put EU-polity issues on the agenda if Euroskeptic parties do so within a specific country.

In a final step we ask whether co-orientation between Euroskeptic and pro-European parties also exists regarding a clear position on EU integration. However, here we expect a reversed effect. Clear criticism from Euroskeptic parties forces the silent pro-European mainstream parties to also position themselves regarding EU integration and therefore to openly voice their pro-European standpoints. Hypothesis 4 therefore claims that Euroskeptic opposition is accompanied by articulated EU-support and therefore can be labeled as *politicization* hypothesis:

H4: If Euroskeptic (fringe) parties clearly voice their negative evaluation of the EU in the campaigns, pro-European parties will clearly state their positive views.

(4) Data, operationalizations, and methods

Before we test our hypotheses we need to describe how we identify and classify parties as Euroskeptic or not and as being fringe or mainstream and how we study their actual campaign communication.

Classification of parties

To classify parties in the eleven countries under study as Euroskeptic or non-Euroskeptic and as fringe or mainstream we rely on expert judgments (see the author list in this paper). Alternative sources of data, i.e., party manifesto data, are not available for all parties in our analysis and therefore cannot serve as the main basis for our classification. However, if manifesto data are available, we make use of them to validate our experts' judgments. In a first step, we need to distinguish Euroskeptic parties from non-Euroskeptic parties. For this purpose, we use a broad concept of Euroskepticism which includes soft and hard, principled and non-principled forms of opposition as well as opposition against

integration per se or against the European Union as such (for these concepts see Kopecký & Mudde, 2002; Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2003; Taggart, 1998). On the basis of this broad definition, we asked the experts to identify those parties that have an underlying Euroskeptic position.

However, as Euroskepticism today is no longer just a fringe phenomenon (Ray, 2007), in a second step we further divide the group of Euroskeptic parties into parties with an extreme ideology and parties that belong to the mainstream. Parties which our country experts classified as conservative / Christian democratic, liberal, social democratic, or green were rated as mainstream, whereas radical right and left parties classify as fringe parties. Table 1 summarizes our classification of Euroskeptic parties in the 11 countries on the basis of these experts' judgments.

// Table 1

Table 1 indicates that we find Euroskeptic parties in all 11 countries. Our categorization supports the notion that Euroskepticism is not a pure fringe phenomenon anymore. In contrast, in 8 of the 11 countries mainstream parties have been classified at least as partly Euroskeptic. It is only Germany, Hungary, and Spain where solely radical right- and left-wing parties are classified as Euroskeptic. In order to validate the judgments of our experts regarding the EU positions of parties, we rely on party manifesto data collected for the 2009 EP elections, more specifically on an index that subtracts all anti-EU statements from all positive EU references within these party manifestos. A value below 0 indicates Euroskepticism, whereas a value above 0 shows that EU support dominates (Braun, Mikhaylov, & Schmitt, 2010; EES, 2009). Overall, a comparison of these two data sources reveals satisfactory results. First, party manifesto data do not add a single Euroskeptic party to our Euroskeptic party sample. Consequently, we are sure that all Euroskeptic parties have been taken into account. Second, of the 32 parties that were identified as (partly) Euroskeptic by our experts, 17 also have a negative value on the party manifesto index. Further, there are five parties that have been identified as Euroskeptic by our experts and show only slightly positive index values pointing to mixed evaluations of the EU in

the manifesto analysis (underlined, Table 1). For five parties we lack manifesto data (in italics, Table 1). Altogether, there are five parties where expert judgments strongly diverge from party manifesto results (in bold font, Table 1): the CU and VVD in the Netherlands and the SLD-UP, PIS, and PSL in Poland. As there is no indication that the data from the party manifesto analysis is more accurate than our experts' judgements,² we rely on the data source that offers information for all parties in our study. Yet we keep these five discrepant cases in mind when interpreting the results.

Content analysis of parties' campaign communication

To study the campaign communication of parties we conduct a content analysis of parties' campaign posters and their televised campaign spots. To date, different analyses have been carried out to study the actual behavior of parties: Party manifestos have been analyzed, print media coverage studied, expert and citizen surveys conducted. All of these methods have their strengths, but they also have their shortcomings (Netjes & Binnema, 2007) since they only partly measure what parties publicly articulate. The most direct way to measure domestic parties' public mobilization is the analysis of their campaign communication. The core messages of parties' campaigns are epitomized in their campaign instruments – the most important being their televised campaign spots and their posters. With these instruments, parties directly reach out to the citizens without having to pass through the selection filter of the mass media.

For each country we include all televised campaign spots and posters of those parties that won more than 3% of the votes in the 2009 EP election. Only for Austria, where televised spots are not common, we include newspaper ads as a functional equivalent. The cut-off criterion of 3% of the votes is necessary to limit the number of parties that are analyzed to a manageable size and to create a data base which allows for cross-national comparisons. However, we chose a low cut-off point so that fringe

² For the Polish PIS party, for example, it is not only our country expert but other researchers (Kopecký & Mudde, 2002) as well that classify this party as Euroskeptic – in contrast to the party manifesto data.

parties without electoral success will also be included in the sample. All posters and spots were collected and content analyzed by our cooperation partners in the 11 countries. To ensure the quality of the content analysis, a common coder training took place in Berlin which was followed by coding exercises and a reliability test which produced satisfactory results (Holsti's reliability coefficient for spots: .73; for posters: .83). After the actual coding had been conducted by the native-speaking cooperation partners, the data was checked for internal consistency and – if necessary – re-coded in order to ensure the best possible quality of data.

To study which *type of EU-issues* Euroskeptical parties put on their campaign agenda (H1), we first of all analyze whether the issues referred to in the spots and posters are discussed from a national, a European, or a national and European perspective.³ For our analysis only issues with a reference to Europe are relevant. For each spot / poster it was possible to code up to ten predefined issues that can be categorized as classical policy issues (economy, social welfare / education, homeland security / law and order, immigration, international affairs, culture, environment / agriculture / traffic), polity issues (constitutional questions as well as enlargement questions), and politics issues (administration / bureaucracy). To test whether Euroskeptical fringe parties focus more strongly on EU-polity issues compared to Euroskeptical mainstream parties (H1), we compare the share of EU-policy, EU-polity, and EU-politics issues for both party types.

To test Hypothesis 2a (*degree of EU opposition*), we study the amount of critique that is directed towards the European Union. To do so, for each spot or poster we code how the party evaluates the European Union / EU integration in its current form. The evaluations can either be explicit or expressed indirectly by giving positive or negative descriptions of the EU. A value of -1 indicates critique, a

³ A spot dealing with national taxes is coded as a national scope; a spot dealing with Brussels bureaucracy is coded EU; a spot dealing with disputes among EU states (e.g. regarding nuclear power stations in border regions or the weighting of votes in the Council) is also coded as an EU scope. Finally, a spot referring to national and EU taxes has a “mixed” scope (EU and national).

value of +1 support, and a value of 0 shows that the evaluation is either balanced or that there is no evaluation of the EU / EU integration. We expect Euroskeptic fringe parties to articulate stronger criticism towards the European Union than Euroskeptic mainstream parties (H2a).

To test whether Euroskeptic fringe parties voice principled opposition against EU integration more often than Euroskeptic mainstream parties (Hypothesis 2b), we need to study different *forms of EU opposition*. To do so we code the visions formulated by parties about EU integration. A clear indicator for principled, in other words, hard forms of opposition is a vision that calls for a withdrawal from the Union. Other visions indicate a non-principled / soft form of EU opposition (for this distinction, see Szczerbiak & Taggard, 2003), e.g., if parties set their priorities by defining the entity the EU should constitute (a trading bloc or a social protection shield, etc.), by emphasizing enlargement or deepening, by focusing on democracy or efficiency, or by calling for different concepts of democratization. Finally, there are visions that can neither be classified as purely principled nor as purely non-principled, as they do not per se object against the whole integration project, but question the existing allocation of competences. These visions see to the nation state as the appropriate level of problem-solving or they push for intergovernmental integration.

To study processes of co-orientation, we compare the campaigns of Euroskeptic parties to the campaigns of pro-European parties within each country. For an analysis of Hypothesis 3, we calculate the share of EU-polity issues of all EU-issues put on the campaign agenda. We expect that pro-European parties discuss the shape and reach of EU integration (EU-polity issues) within a specific country if Euroskeptic parties do so too (H3). Finally, for an analysis of Hypothesis 4, we compare the evaluation of the European Union / EU integration in its current form voiced by Euroskeptic parties to the evaluation by pro-European mainstream parties. We expect that a strong negative evaluation of the EU by Euroskeptic parties is accompanied by pro-European mainstream parties' clear, positive statements on EU integration (H4).

Before turning to the results, we need to add a final note on the logic of our data analysis. First, our unit of analysis is the party campaign, not the individual spot or poster. As a consequence, we calculated summary scores for each party to which each poster or televised spot contributes the same. These summary scores are based on 218 spots and posters of parties that were classified as Euroskeptic by our experts ($N = 112$ spots / including newspapers ads in the Austrian case; $N = 106$ posters). For non-Euroskeptic parties we coded $N = 292$ spots and posters ($N = 112$ spots / including newspapers ads in the Austrian case); $N = 180$ posters). Second, any analysis beyond the level of single parties is based on these summary scores per party. This means that each party contributes the same to these summary scores independent from the number of campaign materials it produced. Further, when calculating averages across countries, we additionally controlled for the number of parties within a country to make sure that countries with many parties do not distort the overall picture.

(5) Results

Campaign communication of Euroskeptic parties

On the basis of the party classification in Table 1, we now select parties with a Euroskeptic position and study their campaign communication in the 2009 EP elections. Here, we are especially interested in finding out if there are systematic differences between fringe and mainstream Euroskeptic parties regarding the type of EU-issues they put on the agenda and the degree and form of EU opposition voiced in their campaigns.

Regarding the *type of EU-issues* on the agenda, we expect that Euroskeptic fringe parties feature EU-polity issues more prominently compared to Euroskeptic mainstream parties because a discussion of EU-polity issues allows them to put the fundamental questions of EU integration on the campaign agenda (H1). Figure 1 supports Hypothesis 1. It is the Euroskeptic fringe parties who most openly put EU-polity issues on the campaign agenda. Around 50% of all issues addressed in their campaigns with a European reference refer to polity (and to a much lesser degree to politics) issues. Euroskeptic mainstream parties in contrast primarily feature policy issues if they discuss European matters. ANOVA analysis shows that the difference between Euroskeptic fringe and mainstream parties is statistically

significant. For the ideological more extreme parties, we find support for Mair's thesis: They campaign exactly on those issues, where the EP has only little competence. Here, right-wing extremists stand out: 60% of EU-issue mobilization by radical right-wing parties refer to polity issues, whereas radical left-wing parties have a share of only 20%. It is the right-wing extremist parties which not only campaign against Europe on a cultural dimension (Adam & Maier, 2009b; Kriesi et al., 2006), but also stress the fundamental questions regarding the shape and reach of EU integration within their campaigns.

// Figure 1

Turning to *the degree of opposition* against the EU and European integration, respectively, we again expect that it is the Euroskeptic fringe parties that articulate their critique more strongly than Euroskeptic mainstream parties (H2a). Table 2 summarizes the results regarding these evaluations of today's EU integration. A value of -1 indicates that a party voices critique in each poster or spot it releases, whereas + 1 stands for full support of the integration project. Also, Hypothesis 2a seems to be supported as Euroskeptic fringe parties on average voice more critique (-.38) than mainstream Euroskeptics (-.20). Yet, this difference does not prove to be statistically significant in ANOVA analysis.

// Table 2

The analysis so far shows that criticizing the EU in public is still the field of the ideologically more extreme Euroskeptic parties with only small differences between right and left-wing extremists: Right-wing extremists have an average score of -.37, whereas left-wing extremists score at -.40.

Finally, we expect that Euroskeptic fringe parties voice principled opposition against EU integration more often than Euroskeptic mainstream parties (Hypothesis 2b). We study the form of EU opposition by analyzing the future visions for EU integration that parties publicly advance in their campaigns. In

general, we can conclude from our data that Euroskeptic parties only seldom envision the future of EU integration. Of 218 televised spots and posters, only 81 items contain vision statements. These vision statements, however, do not support Hypothesis 2b. Neither Euroskeptic fringe parties nor Euroskeptic mainstream parties do in general publicly advance a clear-cut, hard form of EU opposition. There is only one country, namely the UK, where Euroskeptic voices formulate clear-cut, principled opposition against the EU. The British UKIP and BNP are the only parties in our sample that call for a complete withdrawal from the Union. The other Euroskeptic parties in our 11 country sample do not publicly advance a comparably hard form of EU opposition. Euroskepticism therefore is communicated differently in the UK compared to the rest of continental Europe.

Within continental Europe, different forms of Euroskepticism are voiced in the campaigns. Those forms that lie between principled and unprincipled forms of opposition are found among fringe Euroskeptic parties in Bulgaria (ATAKA), the Czech Republic (Suveren), the Netherlands (PVV, SP), and Portugal (PCP / PEV). In addition, the Polish PIS, a mainstream party, also shows this form of Euroskepticism. These parties promote the national level as superior for problem-solving.⁴ Such an evaluation does not necessarily indicate a rejection of the integration project per se, but it does cast doubts whether competences should be shifted to the European level. The other visions formulated in the 2009 party campaigns point to unprincipled forms of EU opposition. Here, parties fight over the type of entity the EU should constitute or about its core tasks. Frequent among left parties are claims that see the EU as a social protection shield (SPÖ in Austria, Linke in Germany, SLD-UP in Poland, BE and PCP/ PEV in Portugal, and IU-ICV-EUIA-BA in Spain), as a peace force (KSCM in the Czech Republic, Linke in Germany, as well as the two left Portuguese parties BE and PCP / PEV), or that call for more transparency and democracy (BE, PCP / PEV in Portugal, IU-CIV-EUIA-BA in Spain as well as CDS-PP, a conservative party in Portugal). Visions formulated by right-wing parties

⁴ Although one needs to add that this national focus is sometimes combined with references to the EU-level as the appropriate level for problem-solving (e.g. PIS, Attack).

call for less power of the European Parliament (CU, PVV in the Netherlands, Junilistan in Sweden as well as BNP in the UK). The liberals in the Netherlands (VVD) as well as the conservatives in Poland (PSL) stress efficiency considerations regarding EU integration.

Euroskeptic parties and the overall campaigns

In this final section we search for indicators of co-orientation between parties within the same national party system. We expect processes of co-orientation to occur as no party on its own has a monopolistic control over the campaign agenda. Instead, parties use other parties within the same country as reference points. Thus, we expect processes of co-orientation to also occur between Euroskeptic and non-Euroskeptic parties. By taking full advantage of the comparative research design, we study whether non-Euroskeptic parties put EU-polity issues on the campaign agenda and voice clear-cut positions regarding EU integration if this is what Euroskeptic parties do.

Hypothesis 3 expects that pro-European parties will discuss the shape and reach of EU integration (EU-polity issues) if Euroskeptic parties do so within a specific country. As in Figure 1, we divide all issues discussed with an EU reference into policy, politics, or polity issues. For our analysis here, we focus on the share of polity discussions dealing with the shape and reach of the Union. We have chosen these discussions as they lie at the core of Mair's (2007) argument that EP campaigns – even if they are Europeanized – deal with those issues for which the European Parliament lacks decision-making power. Table 3 summarizes the results. It shows that in our 11 country sample – contrary to Mair's argument – only about 17% of all issues with an EU reference deal with polity questions. Mair's general argument best describes the campaigning of Euroskeptic (right-wing) parties (26%), less so the campaigns of non-Euroskeptic parties (8%). Moreover, it is only in specific countries, namely Austria, Bulgaria, Portugal, the UK, and to a lesser degree also the Czech Republic and the Netherlands, where polity issues play a substantial role in the 2009 campaign agenda.

Table 3 does not support the idea of co-orientation between Euroskeptical and non-Euroskeptical parties regarding the type of EU-issues discussed. With the exception of the UK and Bulgaria, where non-Euroskeptical parties also discuss EU-political issues (however to a lesser extent), we do not find any sign for co-orientation. Strong political mobilization from Euroskeptics in the Czech Republic and the Netherlands is not taken up at all by the non-Euroskeptics. The results in Austria and Portugal are similar. This finding is supported by Pearson correlation: We do not find any significant correlation between the share of EU-political issues put on the campaign agenda by Euroskeptical parties and the share articulated by non-Euroskeptical parties. In sum, our data do not support Hypothesis 3.

// Table 3

Finally we search for co-orientation regarding the articulation of clear-cut positions towards EU integration. For this research question, Hypothesis 4 expects a reversed effect. The stronger Euroskeptical parties voice their negative evaluation of the EU in their campaigns, the stronger pro-European parties respond with positive evaluations regarding EU integration (H4). If this hypothesis holds true, we would be able to observe a true politicization of European politics. Similar to the procedure followed in Table 2, we calculate a score ranging from -1 to +1, where -1 indicates that all campaign material of a party contains EU criticism, and a value of +1 shows full support, while 0 indicates a balanced or neutral campaign.

Table 4 confirms our hypothesis regarding a co-orientation process with regard to the formulation of clear-cut positions towards EU integration. It shows that Euroskeptical parties on average pursue a moderate form of EU criticism (-.21), whereas non-Euroskeptical parties in general campaign in a rather neutral way (.05). However, there are three countries in our sample, for which we find strong indicators that the pro-EU consensus is over, namely the Netherlands (-.55), Sweden (-.59), and the UK (-.67). In these countries, however, we do not find signs that non-Euroskeptical parties take up this criticism. In contrast, we can observe the postulated reversed effect: In these countries non-Euroskeptical

parties show the strongest support for EU integration compared to all other countries in the sample. Thus, it seems that strong anti-EU mobilization makes the pro-European parties defend their pro-EU standpoints with more enthusiasm. If this holds true, we can observe a true politicization of EU integration – one that is characterized by a publicly visible polarization of opinions and values (De Wilde, 2007). In all other countries, the difference between Euroskeptic and non-Euroskeptic parties is relatively small. This means that in most cases we find neither strong anti-EU mobilization by the Euroskeptics nor strong positive references by pro-European parties. How close both types of parties have become is especially visible in Poland: Here it is the non-Euroskeptics who even surpass the Euroskeptic parties in their public criticism of EU integration. By means of Pearson correlation we can also confirm such processes of co-orientation statistically. Regressing the evaluation scores of Euroskeptic parties and non-Euroskeptic parties in each country reveals a strong negative correlation which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that more extreme positions on one side are accompanied by more extreme positions on the other side.

// Table 4

(5) Conclusion

What have Euroskeptic parties done in their campaigns in the run-up to the 2009 European Parliament elections – which types of EU-issues have they put on their campaign agendas, which degree and form of EU opposition have they voiced? And is there co-orientation between Euroskeptic and pro-European parties with regard to their campaigns? To answer these two questions we conducted an 11 country comparative study based on a quantitative content analysis of the parties' campaign materials (televised spots and posters). In this conclusion we summarize our main findings in three points and then close with some research desiderates.

The first central finding of our study refers to the type of EU-issues parties place on their campaign agendas. Our findings question the general applicability of Mair's thesis (2007): Across all parties and

countries EU-polity issues are used less often in the campaigns than EU-policy issues. Consequently, at least in reference to parties' own campaigns, we do not find indicators that citizens' choices in these elections can be called irrelevant as the issues they cast their vote on actually are issues for which the European Parliament has competences. However, our study has identified right-wing Euroskeptic fringe parties as those openly campaigning on the fundamental question of integration regarding the shape and reach of the Union. With their focus on EU-polity issues, Euroskeptic fringe parties clearly outweigh Euroskeptic mainstream parties (support for H1). The relatively low salience of EU-polity issues in the overall campaigns is also the result of the lack of co-orientation (rejection of H3): Non-Euroskeptic parties in general do not adopt the polity focus of their Euroskeptic competitors. Only in UK and Bulgaria has the debate around the shape and reach of the Union, which especially right-wing extremists have placed on the agenda, been picked up by non-Euroskeptic parties.

Second, Euroskepticism in EP campaigns has different facettes with regard to the degree and form of opposition presented in the campaigns. In general, it is Euroskeptic fringe parties that challenge the pro-EU consensus. These parties criticize the integration process loudly, whereas Euroskeptic mainstream parties still hesitate to voice their criticism (support for H2a). However, we could not find support for this clear distinction between Euroskeptic fringe and mainstream parties regarding the form of opposition voiced (rejection of H2b). Principled forms of opposition are only rarely voiced among Euroskeptic parties in our 11 country sample. Such a principled form of opposition can only be found in the UK. UKIP and BNP do not only voice clear-cut EU criticism but also combine this criticism with a call for a withdrawal from the Union. This finding indicates that Euroskepticism, also widespread today, has different manifestations that differ between Euroskeptic mainstream and fringe parties. Further, our results indicate that Euroskepticism means something different on the British Isles compared to continental Europe.

Third, we can observe a true politicization of EU integration – one that is characterized by a publicly visible polarization of opinions and values. In those countries where Euroskeptic parties most harshly

criticize EU integration (i.e., the Netherlands, Sweden, and UK), non-Euroskeptics show the most positive EU evaluations in our 11 country sample. The notion that non-Euroskeptics are pushed into an active defense of their pro-EU positions is also confirmed statistically: The more extreme negative evaluations are voiced by Euroskeptics, the more positive positions are also presented by pro-Europeans (support of H4). This effect turns out to be statistically significant. If this holds true in other settings, we can speak of a reversed mobilization effect (for a similar concept applied to citizens, see Schuck & De Vreese, 2009) that leads to politicization. In this election we have observed such politicization in the Netherlands, in Sweden, and the UK. In these countries parties have taken the opportunity to differentiate themselves in EU terms (Eijk & Franklin, 2004). As a result, we question whether the description of EP campaigns as uncontested and purely national is still valid. At least under specific conditions we find that contrary positions regarding EU integration are voiced.

Where should we head from here? Our analysis shows that the distinction between Euroskeptical positions and actual Euroskeptical mobilization is important. We agree with Szczerbiak and Taggart (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2003) that this distinction can help eliminate much confusion in research about Euroskeptical parties. This goes along with the fact that one needs to measure and explain parties' Euroskeptical positions and campaign mobilization with different factors. Regarding explanations, we need to rely on strategic considerations to explain mobilization, whereas ideological considerations are more important to understand positions (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2003). In reference to measurement, we have suggested to use expert judgments as indicator for the underlying ideological orientation, whereas we seek to measure parties' actual campaign communication with the method of content analysis. A combination of both data sources on Euroskepticism has its advantages. First, it allows us to show that Euroskeptical positions do not necessarily translate into Euroskeptical mobilization. In our study, Euroskepticism has gone mainstream position-wise, but less so mobilization-wise. It is mainstream Euroskeptical parties that have refrained from discussing EU-polity issues and that have been hesitant to openly criticize the EU. Second, we can compare whether ideologically similar types of Euroskeptical parties also use similar campaign strategies. In this paper, we have distinguished main-

stream and fringe Euroskeptic parties. Yet, we see the necessity for future research to work with more fine-grained classifications. Finally, such a distinction has the advantage that we do not confound all critique towards the EU with Euroskepticism. General EU supporters may well formulate criticism towards the Union, which does not automatically turn them into Euroskeptic parties.

Last but definitely not least, further research should more closely analyze the concept of co-orientation. Our results suggest that co-orientation exists between Euroskeptic and non-Euroskeptic parties within the national party systems with regard to their campaign strategies. Yet, further research is necessary to analyze in which areas this co-orientation occurs and under which conditions it happens. Of special interest for further research is the reversed mobilization effect regarding parties' EU-evaluations. If we can confirm that strong criticism towards the EU by Euroskeptic parties leads to a counter-mobilization on the side of pro-European parties, then we would have uncovered an important mechanism fostering the polarization of opinions on - and thereby politicization of - EU integration.

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Table 1: Euroskeptical parties included in the study (experts' judgement)

	Euroskeptical fringe parties	Euroskeptical mainstream parties
Austria	<i>Bündnis Zukunft Österreich [BZÖ]</i> (4.6; Rext), Freiheitliche Partei Österreich [FPÖ] (12.7; Rext), Liste Dr. Martin [Liste M] (17.7; Rext)	<u>Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs [SPÖ]</u> (23.7; L; PIREDEU: +2.0.),
Bulgaria	National Union Attack [ATAKA] (12.0; Rext)	<i>Order, Law and Justice .[RZS/P3C]</i> (4.7; R)
Czech Republic	<i>Suverenita [Suveren]</i> (4.3; Rext), Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy [KSCM] (14.2; Lext)	Občanská demokratická strana [ODS] (31.5; R)
Germany	<u>DIE LINKE [Linke]</u> (7.5; Lext; PIREDEU: +0.24)	
Hungary	Jobbik Magyarországi Mozgalom [JOB-BIK] (14.8; Rext)	
Netherlands	Socialistische Partij [SP] (7.1; Lext), Partij voor de Vrijheid [PVV] (17.0; Rext),	Christen Unie [CU] (6.8; R; PIREDEU: +11.03), Partij voor de Dieren [<i>PvdD</i>] (3.5; R), Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie [VVD] (11.4; Lib; PIREDEU: +9.41)
Poland		Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej – Unia Pracy [SLD-UP] (12.3; L; PIREDEU: 6.73), Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe [PSL] (7.0; R; PIREDEU: 10.65), Prawo i Sprawiedliwość [PIS] (27.4; R, PIREDEU: 6.27)
Portugal	Bloco de Esquerda [BE] (10.7; Lext), CDU-Coligação Democrática Unitária [PCP /	<u>Partido Popular [CDS-PP]</u> (8.4; R; PIREDEU: +1.51)

	PEV] (10.7; Lext)	
Spain	<u>Izquierda Unida [IU-ICV-EUIA-BA]</u> (3.7; Lext, PIREDEU: +.74)	
Sweden	Vänsterpartiet [V] (5.7; Lext), Sverigedemokraterna [<i>SD</i>] (3.3; <i>Rext</i>)	Miljöpartiet de gröna [MP] (11; Greens), Junilistan [Junilistan] (3.6;--), Piratpartiet [PP]. (7.1; Lib), Arbetarepartiet-Socialdemokraterna [<u>S</u>] (24.4; <u>L</u> ; <u>PIRE-DEU: +1.39</u>)
UK	British National Party [BNP] (6.0.; Rext)	Conservative Party [Cons] (27.0; R), United Kingdom Independence Party [UKIP] (16.1; R)

Note I: in bracket (vote share in the 2009 EP election; ideological orientation of party: L = Left (social democrats), R = Right (conservatives / Christian democrats), Lext = radical left / communists, Rext = radical / populist right; Lib = liberals, Greens; -- = not classifiable);

Note II: in italics = not included in EES study; underlined = slight positive value in EES study; bold = value significantly above 0 in EES study.

Table 2: Evaluations of EU integration by types of Euroskeptical parties

	EU evaluation (mean)	SD	N
Fringe Euroskeptical	-38	.37	16
Mainstream Euroskeptical	-20	.48	16
Total (Euroskeptical)	-.29	.43	32

Basis: N=32 parties;

Calculation: Mean evaluation score [-1,+1]; -1 = critique only; +1= support only;

Test: ANOVA; difference between fringe and mainstream parties does not prove to be statistically significant.

Table 3: Share of polity issues of all issues discussed with an EU reference — co-orientation

% (average)	Aus	Bul	CZ	Ger	Hun	NL	Pol	Port	Sp	Sw	UK	Total
Euroskeptics	37.5	75.0	33.3	0	--	36.4	11.1	38.5	0	6.7	48.3	26.07
Non-Euroskeptics	7.1	16.7	0	0	0	0	28.6	10.4	0	4.2	25.0	8.36
Country average	27.4	36.1	20.0	0	0	20.2	15.5	27.3	0	5.2	36.7	17.13
N (party campaigns)	6	3	5	5	1	9	4	5	4	7	4	53

Basis: $N = 53$ parties, ($N = 13$ missing, as these parties do not discuss issues with an EU reference — at least for the fixed issue categories);

Test: Pearson correlation between %-EU-polity issues of Euroskeptics and non-Euroskeptics per country; positive correlation ($r = .41$); not statistically significant.

Table 4 Evaluation of EU integration — co-orientation

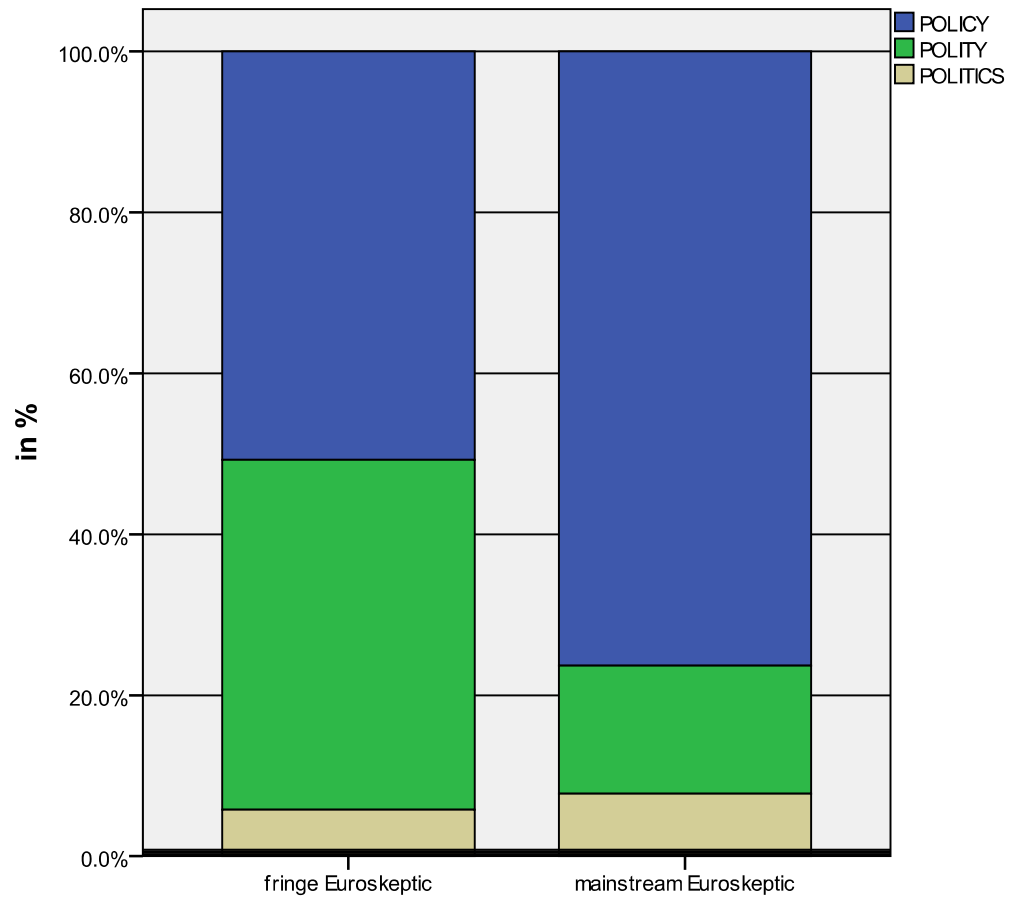
Mean	Aus	Bul	CZ	Ger	Hun	NL	Pol	Port	Sp	Sw	UK	Total
Euroskeptics	-.12	.00	-.06	.00	.00	-.55	.09	-.16	-.22	-.59	-.67	-.21
Non-Euroskeptics	.06	.06	-.10	.04	.09	.13	-.11	.04	.00	.24	.11	.05
EU-evaluation (country)	-.06	.04	-.07	.03	.07	-.25	.04	-.08	-.06	-.26	-.28	-.08
N (party campaigns)	6	8	5	5	4	9	4	5	4	10	6	66

Basis: $N = 66$ parties;

Remark: Each country contributes the same to the average score across countries (consequence: results slightly diverge from the numbers in Table 2);

Test: Pearson correlation between mean evaluation of Euroskeptics and non-Euroskeptics per country; negative correlation ($r = -.70$); statistically significant on the $p < 0.05$ level.

Figure 1: The average share of polity, politics, and policy issues of all issues with an EU reference per type of Euroskeptical party



Basis: N = 26 party campaigns (N=6 missing, as these parties do not discuss issues with an EU reference – at least for the fixed issue categories);

Test: ANOVA; difference between fringe and mainstream Euroskeptical parties regarding their EU-policy issue articulation is statistically significant on the $p < 0.05$ level.